



Memorandum

To: Paul Bockelman, Town Manager
From: Pamela Nolan Young, DEI Director
Re: July 5th Police and Youth Interaction
Date: October 14, 2022

Addendum to the August 14, 2022 DEI Report

At the request of the Town Manager, I offer the following addendum to my August 14, 2022 report. The addendum is based on additional information from the Amherst Police Department, the personal statement of Mr. William Stewart and the anonymous statements of the families and youths.

The Department of Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) was created to assist the Town of Amherst in its Diversity Equity and Inclusion initiatives as espoused on the Town web site¹. The Director who reports to the Town Manager is charged with working with Town Council, Town Departments, Town Boards and Committees, managers and staff on diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives. A primary responsibility of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion Department is to review and provide advice on matters that may be perceived as discriminatory or counter to the diversity, equity, and inclusion values espoused by the Town.

1. The Department of Diversity Equity and Inclusion does not have the authority to conduct an independent investigation of the Amherst Police Department.
2. The Amherst Police Department has complied with all MGLC. 6E Peace Officer Standards and Training requirements to date. ([POST](#))
3. Following August, 15, 2022, Town Council meeting, the Amherst Police Department contacted the parents or guardians of each minor involved in the July 5th police interaction. Only two families responded to the request for additional information. One family disputed the reported actions of the police, the other did not dispute the actions of the police.

Summary of Disputed Facts	The Police Response
A multiracial response to a noise complaint in a low-income neighborhood was discriminatory over policing.	At: 12:37 AM two Amherst police officers responded to a 12:32 AM noise complaint as documented by the Computer Aided Dispatch system (CAD). The officers were riding solo in their vehicles. Two vehicles responded to the complaint pursuant to the police protocol.
The minors were in three small groups and quietly talking.	The officers responded to a noise complaint that was made by a named individual. The individual who made the complaint identifies as a member of the Black,

	Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) community. Pursuant, to police protocol the youths were gathered into one group.
Language discrimination occurred because neither of the officers at the scene spoke Spanish	One of the officers communicated with the parent that spoke Spanish. That officer did not perceive a language barrier.
Race based discrimination occurred because six of the nine youths identify as BIPOC	The six BIPOC youths were NOT treated differently than the three White youths.
The officers voiced an intention to discriminate against college students as the officers offered this as an excuse for their behavior.	The officers state the age of the youth was the most important factor in determining the course of action, not their status as high school or college students.
The attitude of the officers arriving at the scene, their continued presence after the arrival of two parents, and the position of the officers' cars while awaiting the tow truck escalated the situation.	The officers remained on the scene until all the youth were in the custody of a parent or guardian. The scene was cleared at 1:26 AM as reported in CAD.

4. The Amherst Police Department participated in a De-escalation Instructor Course conducted by Blue Shields Tactical Systems from September 12th -14th 2022. The Department sent their two primary defensive tactics instructors, a lieutenant and a sergeant to the train the trainer event. These officers will provide training to the department.
5. The Town Manager has directed the Town of Amherst Communication Director, Brianna Sunryd, to establish a communication protocol for prominent incidents including press releases.
6. The Town Manager has directed the DEI Department to engage a consultant to conduct a series of racial healing workshops. The DEI Department has begun to gather the names of potential consultants and has contacted one individual on the list.

Observations:

Some of the youths and families involved in the July 5th Police interaction have expressed feeling harmed. No one is in a position to deny another's feelings. We can all agree the patrolman's statement to the minors regarding their" individual rights" was incorrect. As the Town moves to be a safe and welcoming community based on mutual respect for all, harm will occur, but reconciliation is possible. As a community we must have the courage to admit a mistake and act to correct it, the strength to do the hard work of reconciliation, and, have the capacity to forgive and show grace.

ⁱ Dedication to education and programming that reflects the unique diversity of our community, elevating the cultural awareness of all who live, work, and visit the Town.

Commitment to provide inclusive and equitable access to all Town activities, facilities, programs, and resources.

Commitment to and accountability for advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in our government.

Maintenance of partnerships and positive relationships with all members of Amherst and its surrounding communities.

Recognition of all aspects of human differences including, but not limited to: Race, color, ethnicity, language, immigration status, gender, gender identity, sexual preference or expression, age, ability, religion, and criminal history - all contributing to the richness of our community while empowering our community members.